

## John Jones' Find

It Was a Vacant House That Paid a Good Rental

By NATHAN B. TOWNSEND

Johnny Jones, a Maine farmer boy, went to the city to make a fortune, but, getting stranded, started to walk home, a hundred miles, usually sleeping out of doors.

One afternoon while wending his way eastward along the coast he came to a handsome country residence standing alone. Looking about him, he could not see another house, though the coast was open in either direction for several miles. But Johnny doubted if he could get any comfort in the place, for he could see no evidence of its being occupied. The shutters were closed, not one being left open. Then, too, there was an old look about the house. The shingles on the roof were black and crumpled, the woodwork in places was rotten, and only the brick of which the house was mainly built was solid.

"If I could get inside," said John to himself, "I could at least keep warm, and the night promises to be cold."

He had on only the thinnest clothing and shivered as a chill November wind struck him. Climbing the fence—the gate was fastened with a rusty chain and padlock—he went up on to the porch and began to look about him for a means of entrance. He was not long in finding a shutter with a loose fastening and a pane of broken glass behind it. Putting his hand inside, he unlocked the sash and raised it.

To his surprise, the room into which he looked was furnished. True, there was a moldy look about the furniture, but it was of a fine quality, though old fashioned. John climbed over the window sill and inspected the furnishings at closer range. He was in the drawing room among damask covered chairs and sofas and velvet curtains to the windows. A piano stood at one end, and John struck the keys. He was startled at the breaking of the stillness. It seemed to him that the shades of those who had once inhabited this house, who had years ago locked and left it, had cried out at his intrusion.

John felt to wondering why so much valuable property was left to rot. Though young, he considered the financial feature connected with it. Had the property been sold years before it would have brought what to him would have been a fortune. There must be some reason why it had been suffered to sink to ruin.

John hesitated about spending the night in so ghoulish a place, and had it not been for the cold without he would have preferred to sleep under the stars. As it was, he looked about for a bed and, though he was hungry, finally got on to one of the couches upstairs. But it seemed to him that he was lying among worms. He took hold of a coverlet to draw it over him, and it parted through decay. This was too much for him; he arose and felt his way downstairs and, finding a lounge covered with leather, though it was stiff through age, stretched himself on it and fell asleep.

He was awakened during the night by voices. For a few moments he could not recall where he was. Then he listened for the direction of the sound and concluded that it came from under him. Presently a light flashed through a crack in the floor. Sliding off the lounge, he crawled to the crack and put his ear to it.

"We've got to run in some of these goods," said one in a man's voice. "This cellar is full."

"Why not store the next lot above?"

"What rot! Don't you know we've taken every pains to keep any one from looking in here? Put goods on the floor above, and some boy or some tramp will look in, see them and report the fact."

"It's a wonder no one has got on to us as it is," remarked a third man. "They've gone around this depot often. Fact is, it's well known that Crawford owns it, and Crawford is above suspicion."

"We pay him enough rent for it."

"Rent be hanged! He's one of us."

"He tells me the place can't remain much longer as it is. A number of real estate men have been to him to buy it. They want to fix it up and make it pay."

"Crawford is making it pay well enough."

This was the last heard of a dialogue between different men, none of whom John could see. He heard something fall and thought a bolt was shot, though he could not be sure of this, then all was silent again. He lay awake, thinking about what he had heard, but couldn't make out anything except that the basement was used for the storage of goods. Were they stolen articles? Were they barrels of liquor manufactured illegally? The reason for the house remaining in its present condition was apparent. This man Crawford was keeping it for a purpose. It had doubtless long been shut up and was not an object of curiosity. Turning these things over in his mind John fell asleep again.

When he awoke in the morning the sun was shining in through a broken blind. John arose from his couch and looked about him. He was in a library. Books were on the shelves, but they were dusty and dingy. He went through a door into a pantry and

through the pantry into the dining room. He opened some cupboard doors in a vain hope of finding something to eat. There was not a crust, and not a crust had been there for years. He went to the stairs leading down into the cellar, but the door separating the cellar and main floor was fastened. He tried to kick it open, but failed to make any impression on it.

Leaving the house by the window through which he had entered, he looked about the brickwork below the first floor. There were but two small windows, over both of which boards had been placed on the inside. There was not a crack through which he could look within.

How were the goods taken in? There were no marks of wheels on the entrance road. Indeed, the grass grew on it as well as on the lawn. The chain and lock on the gate gave no evidence of having been moved in a long while. Toward the ocean a distance of several hundred yards there were no tracks of any kind. There was no opening from the cellar except within the house. This matter of the storage of goods was a mystery.

John walked out to the rocks which formed the shore. Here he was more at home, for he had been brought up near the water. Naturally his eyes fell upon the irregularity that marked the shore. There were many protuberances, many indentations. He descended to the sea level, and the tide being at the ebb, noticed a place where the water washed in under the rocks. John wondered how far it extended. He couldn't tell without going in under the rock, and this was impossible without a boat or a raft unless he swam, and the water was too cold for swimming.

The boy pondered on what he should do. Should he go on home or remain and try to solve the mystery? Curiosity held him. He would go back to the house and see if he could not look into the cellar through the crack at which he had listened. He did so, but the cellar was too dark for him to see anything. His mind reverted to the overhanging rock, and he went back to have another look at it. The rising tide had partly covered the place, and he knew that it would be nearly twelve hours before the water would give him an opportunity to examine it again.

He resolved to improve the interval by securing a boat or building a raft to use in his investigations. Going to a wood near by, he saw plenty of fallen timber, and after walking several miles to a house where he was given some breakfast he returned and carried sufficient wood to the shore to make a float. He laced the pieces together with twigs and when the float subsided in the afternoon put his raft into the water and paddled to the rock in question. Lying flat, he pulled himself in under the land some twenty feet, when he came to an iron door it was fastened with an iron bolt which, being covered with a wooden

every tide, was so rusty that he could not move it. He scuttled out, got a stone, returned and by hammering opened the door. There before him lay a subterranean passage leading in the direction of the house.

Not having a light, the young discoverer did not attempt to investigate any further. He had no mind to be caught in a trap by an incoming tide. He got out as quickly as possible and, sitting on a rock, bethought himself what next to do. He concluded to go on home and consult with some one about his find. He was not sure but that there was something in it for him, and he wished to find a way to get it out.

John was a secretive boy, and, though he told about his experiences in the city, he said nothing about the house by the sea. In a few days, armed with some carpenter's tools and a candle, he went back to it and, closing the shutter behind him through which he entered, took up a part of the floor, went down into the cellar and found it full of boxes and bales.

By this time it occurred to the boy that the house was a storage depot for smugglers. He found a door in the cellar leading into the passage to the water and presumed that the goods were carried in by that route. Replacing everything as he had left it, he made his way to the nearest port of entry and, calling for the collector, told him that he had discovered a depot for smuggled goods. He was too smart to give any clue to it till he had made terms with the government. This necessitated some correspondence between the officials and the government, and it was finally agreed that any smuggled goods that John should point out to the revenue officers half the amount accruing by confiscation should go to him.

These preliminaries having been settled, John led the officers to the house and showed them the goods. But, being desirous of capturing the smugglers, they placed a watch in the house and waited for them to come again. It was several weeks before the unsuspecting men fell into the trap. When they did they found both the egress by the passage to the sea and the one in into the house stopped. They were not taken just after they had deposited a new, valuable boat-load of goods.

Johnny received a small fortune for his information. He decided to go to college and is now a lawyer with a good practice. Inquiries as to the lonely house resulted in his learning that the parties owning it had gone abroad many years before and left it to be sold as it stood. It changed hands several times without being occupied and was finally bought by the Crawford mentioned by the smugglers as an available depot for smuggled goods. He had grown rich by this means.

Sicily has a population of 3,672,238, according to the census of 1911.

## THE HOUSE ACROSS THE WAY.

THERE is a house across the way. Where last year children about were heard. But all is silent there today. Save for the sad, whispered word. No holly wreaths with ribbons aread. In yonder windows shall appear. No letters in the frost are traced. They'll have no Christmas tree this year.

There used to be a sliding place. There in the yard where children played. By one who had a merry face. The loudest noise was always made. But not a child is sliding now. And all is sadly still today.

A shadow seems to rest somehow Upon the house across the way. No child peers from the window there. No toys are piled in corners where. The doors last year were locked, alas!

Within the house across the way. No pleasing, festive signs appear. They speak in whispers there today. And have no thought of Christmas cheer.

—S. E. River in Chicago Record-Herald.

## How to Make Christmas Sweets

THE candy season is again with us. In most families home-made candies are an important feature of the Christmas festivities. The following tested recipes will be helpful to those who need instruction in the pleasurable task of candy making.

Here is a never failing fudge recipe: One-fourth cupful milk, one cupful sugar, butter the size of a walnut, two squares or two ounces of chocolate. Place on stove and melt all together and boil until they cling together in the water without being brittle. When stirring quickly, if the bottom of the pan shows and edges suggest sugariness, it is getting done. Just before taking off the fire add one-half teaspoonful of vanilla, then beat thoroughly until creamy. Pour into a well buttered platter and when almost cool cut into squares. If preferred add chopped nuts just before removing from the fire or form the fudge into balls while warm and roll in ground nuts. You may use peanut butter instead of ordinary butter, especially if you do not use chopped nuts. Preserved figs are excellent when coated with fudge or when mashed and mixed in fudge while warm.

Two cupfuls of brown sugar boiled with milk and stirred continually until it forms a wax ball when tested in cold water makes an excellent candy if mixed with chopped raisins.

This is an inexpensive and delicious candy: Grind one cupful of blanched almonds and the same amount of peanuts in the food chopper. Make a rich fondant with light brown sugar and milk. Stir the fondant constantly until it forms a ball of wax when tested in cold water. Remove it from the fire and stir until it foams. A little cream of tartar will assist in making it creamy. Pour the ground nuts into the candy and place all on a buttered pan. While warm cut the candy into squares. Do not break the pieces apart until cool. When cold dip each piece into melted chocolate, unsweetened.

A firm, ripe banana cut into rather thin slices and dipped in melted sweet chocolate is delicious. Place on oiled paper and set in cool place to harden.

Dip marshmallows into melted chocolate, roll them in ground nuts and set aside to harden. Marshmallows hastily dipped into hard lemon taffy make a good confection.

Melt unsweetened chocolate in a double pan and dip loaf sugar into the melted chocolate and sprinkle the pieces with ground nuts. This is a good candy to give a child.

## The Little Fellers

I. When you see the snowflakes flyin' an' the winter's come to stay Watch out for the little fellers—make the Christmas come their way.

II. Some o' them in lowly places, where the sky is always gray. Win a smile from little fellers—make the Christmas come their way.

III. Bein' friends to little fellers makes o' winter seem like May. Watch out fer 'em on the life road—make the Christmas come their way.

—Atlanta Constitution.

## All Hail the Child!

By DAVID H. GREER, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of New York.

Christmas is the day of the child both in sentiment and doctrine. It is the day when the child is on the throne and when he reigns supreme. Willingly and gladly, with our gifts and presents, we pay our tribute to him. For this one day in the year at least the heart rules the head, and we learn therefrom the lesson which it is the ultimate aim of all theological doctrine to enforce—that we must as little children enter the kingdom of heaven.

Before and After. They say it comes but once a year And when it comes it brings good cheer. But what it leaves along its trail I try to write, but always fail.

—Boston Herald.

Norwegian wood pulp is being imported into Canada.

## Presents For the Boy

FINDING things for the boy at Christmas time may seem more difficult, although no doubt he has just as many wants as his pretty sister. Silver knives with good blades, substantial key rings, pencils and fountain pens always please. Certain things in the jewelry line appeal to the average boy—a case containing cuff buttons and tie pin to match or a good looking watch fob. An inspection of the leather shop displays will soon convince the shopper that there are dozens of things a boy can use and enjoy. Why not give him a leather case containing a soft felt hat or a pair of folding slippers? Another case holds what is called the vacation outfit, a flat clothes brush, two coat and trousers hangers and a folding shoe horn. Leather stickpin cases and collar boxes are also acceptable.

The fastidious boy will not scorn monogrammed handkerchiefs, silk socks and attractive ties. The boy who has arrived at the age and stage of caring about his room will want college pillows, pen and ink set, etc. If one wishes to invest more money in the boy's Christmas, there are automobile lampers and extra equipments, cameras, hunting and fishing outfits, fieldglasses, etc. Every boy wants skates, fur lined gloves and mufflers. For the book lover there is always a goodly store of books, or one may have a characteristic bookplate designed.

A Gift Suggestion. An ideal gift for the bachelor is the "handy" box, containing tags, rubber bands, labels, thumb tacks, twine—in fact, almost any article one might need in dispatching a package or for the hundred and one other conveniences to which these useful articles may be put. One bachelor says he derives more pleasure from one of these boxes which was given to him than from almost any other gift he could mention. The boxes come in various sizes, the number of useful articles contained varying with the size of the box. A gift of this character is well worth considering where a personal gift is not desirable.

Holiday Music. If looking for a Christmas tune, A carol or a glee, I'd recommend that timely tune "Then Yule remember me."

—Louisville Courier-Journal.

In Geneva, Switzerland, every old picture and antique must be registered in the town hall, and its value stated. This is done to protect purchasers of such articles.

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## Sensible Xmas Presents

The list below abounds with sensible, practical and well chosen suggestions in the way of Christmas Gifts for Men and Boys.

Men's and Boys' Gifts are best selected in a "man's store," a store that caters to men's and manish tastes and has found out by experience what men and boys want and like.

This in its truest sense is a "man's store," so come here and make your selections, where the largest and choicest things are on display.

Overcoats .....	\$12.00 to \$35.00	Handkerchiefs .....	\$ .10 to \$ 1.00
Suits .....	\$12.00 to \$35.00	Shirts .....	\$ .50 to \$ 5.00
Bath Robes .....	\$ 5.00 to \$12.00	Neckties .....	\$ .50 to \$ 2.50
Smoking Jackets .....	\$ 5.00 to \$10.00	Hand Bags .....	\$ 4.00 to \$25.00
Gloves .....	\$ 1.00 to \$ 5.00	Suit Cases .....	\$ 1.00 to \$20.00
Hats .....	\$ 1.00 to \$ 5.00	Underwear .....	\$ .50 to \$ 5.00
Caps .....	\$ .50 to \$ 8.00	Hosiery .....	\$ .10 to \$ 1.00
Sweaters .....	\$ 1.00 to \$10.00	Suspenders .....	\$ .25 to \$ 1.00
Umbrellas .....	\$ 1.00 to \$ 5.00	Waists .....	\$ .50 to \$ 1.00
Traveling Sets .....	\$ 2.00 to \$10.00	Collar Bags .....	\$ 1.00 to \$ 3.00

Most of these goods are put up in attractive Xmas Boxes. SHOP EARLY.

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